



News from the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge

June 2016

Volume 1

No. 2



Western Grebes / Nelson

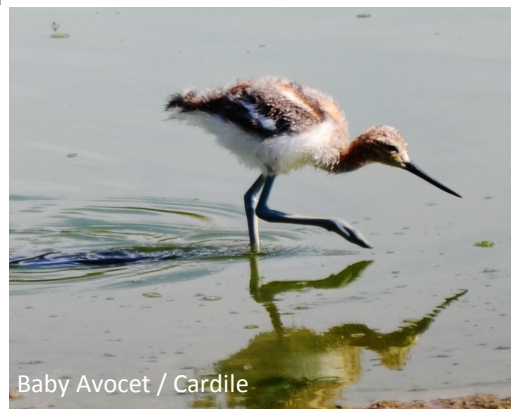
2012 Winning entry from our annual photo contest, "Next Generation" by D. Nelson.

Summer on the Refuge!

By June, virtually all of the breeding bird species are present and accounted for. Many are well into nesting and incubation such as the double-crested cormorants, mallard, white-faced ibis, and California gull. *Summer months are also the best time to view a variety of young birds.* American avocets and black-necked stilt chicks can be seen dashing about the shallows in search of such morsels as water-striders and midge larvae. Be sure to check the tops of piled vegetation in the wetlands for nesting western, Clark's, pied-billed, and eared grebes. Adult grebes with chicks riding upon their backs start to appear.

Spotlight on – biological volunteers

The Refuge has four categories of volunteers: Assistant ranger/tour guides, maintenance/facilities, bookstore, and biological volunteers. Our biological volunteers are very important to the Refuge. They collect and input valuable data that allows us to see trends over time. They also provide great assistance to our wildlife biologist who appreciates their help. With over 80,000 acres of habitat, it is difficult to cover the whole area. These volunteers also provide the Refuge with great photos! Volunteers help with waterbird and general bird surveys amongst other things. This is a dynamic volunteer position which creates memorable experiences for all involved. We appreciate their attention to detail and resilience when assisting our wildlife biologist even when the mosquitos are at their worst.



Baby Avocet / Cardile



Baby Grebe / Zaker



Northern Pintail / Kelly

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U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

April and May connected the Mountain Wilds to the Wetland Wonders.

Throughout the months of April and May, our education team worked hard teaching over 1,080 students about the wetlands through the Wetland Wonders program. The program is divided into four different stations, in which the Box Elder county fourth graders participate. The educational team was able to introduce students to insects that call ponds home at the Macroinvertebrate station. They taught students about signs of wildlife during the Wildlife Walk where, many students enjoyed special moments viewing wildlife up close. During the plant station, fourth graders learned about the benefits of native wetland plants. They were also introduced to an invasive plant called Phragmites, and the harmful effect it has on native plants. Many of our educators enjoyed teaching students about the affects weathering and erosion can have on our watershed at the Watershed station. At this station, educators use a river trailer to first build the watershed, and then show what happens when important wetland plants are removed. Once again, the Wetland Wonders Program was a huge success! Our education team wants to say Thank You to the Box Elder School District, and the Friends of the Bear River Refuge for supporting this important program.



Left: Students learn about Water Quality, and how to classify insects at the Macroinvertebrate station

Right: Dragonfly larvae can be found in the wetland.



Wetland Wings

Wetland Wings lead educator, Susan Snyder from the Ogden Nature Center, took quite a fall in April. This fall left Susan unable to continue teaching the program while she healed. Never fear little ones! With Christine joining the team, we were able to finish out the program for the year. Christine has worked with pre-school aged kids in the past, and was excited to jump into this program. The kids studied Geese in April, where they learned that geese make excellent parents, and even got to make a goose out of mud. May saw the introduction of a new lesson all about Amphibians! The kids got to meet our newest educational ambassadors, Tiger Salamanders: Sally and Mander (stop by and say hi to them next time your visit). They were also able to make a frog mask, complete with a long tongue for catching flies. As always the Wetland Wings program was a soaring success!



Left: Alyssa (Refuge Educator) teaching kids about water on Earth Day at the Ogden Nature Center

Environmental Education Continued...

The wrap-up of the MWWW program was not the end of the busy teaching season for our Education team. Our team has taught over 1,360 students, teachers, and parents through other onsite Environmental Education Programs throughout the year. They have also been able to spread the word about the Refuge through outreach events. The team traveled to Ogden, where they were able to partner with the Forest Service. The two agency teams helped celebrate Earth day at the Ogden Nature Center, through watershed education. The group taught close to 2,500 people. Our educators were also able to participate in the Great Salt Lake Bird Festival. Alyssa and Christine helped kids make bird masks, and educated them about the birds at the Refuge. The two interacted with close to 125 people. The Education team looks forward to the teaching season each year, and is excited to see the programs continue to grow.

What's next for the Refuge Education Team?

By the second week of June, our education team will have partnered with the Brigham City Fine Arts Center, and helped with Nature Art Camp. This year's theme is "Beaks and Bills". Not only will students get to learn about beaks from our educators, but they will also be making beak-related crafts. Once camp is over, the team will be busy attending a Climate Change workshop hosted by the Hogle Zoo. The workshop's aim is to teach educators how to implement climate change into their teaching. Next time you visit, say hi to our education team. They would love to show you a thing or two around the Refuge!



Left: Christine (Refuge Educator) leading the Wetland Wings program

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Highlighting Past Events and Training

CPR/ First Aid, and Water Rescue

Training On June 1st, Greg Mullin, our Law Enforcement Officer, taught a certification class. Close to 20 staff and volunteers participated in the course to refresh techniques and learn new CPR and First Aid skills. Thank you Greg for leading us through this hands-on class. All those who participated are now prepared to assist in case of an emergency situation.



Above: Wyatt (Fire Seasonal) assists Greg (Law Enforcement Officer and CPR/First Aid Trainer) in learning how to make a sling



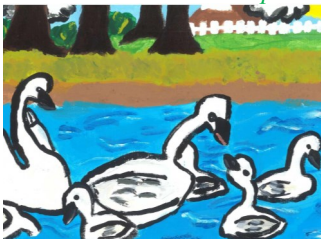
International

Migratory Bird Day

Thanks for coming out to celebrate 100 years of bird conservation! Bird sayings from different countries were found throughout The Wildlife Educational Center. Visitors were able to make colorful bird bookmarks and bird masks! Refuge Biologist, Howard Bowers, led two tours for the Great Salt Lake Bird Festival. Both days, they spotted over 70 species, including Trumpeter Swans! Thanks to the Friends of the Bear River Refuge, staff, and volunteers- another super fun and successful IMBD was celebrated at the Refuge!



*Bradley Gray, 4th Grade
Best of Show Winner for
Utah Junior Duck Stamp*



Rylie Kimball, 1st Grade

Junior Duck Stamp Award Ceremony was held in conjunction with **International Migratory Bird Day on Saturday, May 14, 2016.** The award ceremony was truly a success with a wonderful attendance! Thank you all who came out, as well as Bob Barrett for the introduction, Judges- Tracy Gilson and Andy Peterson, Kathi Stopher and Andrea Johnson for coordinating, and especially all the young artists for sharing your immense talent with us. It's a joy to view the beautiful artistic depictions of North American waterfowl created by our local artists! The ceremony was complimented by refreshments and treats.

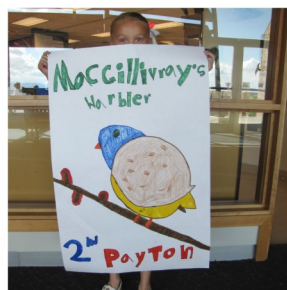
After 20 years of Bird Banner traditions, the community has reached it's second generation of artists! Thanks to Marci Hatch, Box Elder School District Secretary, and her outreach- the Bird Banner project had quite an increase in participation for 2016! In 2015, the project received entries from eight schools. School participation grew this year with seven-teen schools represented. **This year's Bird Banner contest received just over 1000 entries!**

Banner winners were selected, and invited to attend the annual bird banner party at the Refuge. This party gives students the opportunity turn their original bird drawing into large-scaled art. After recreating their art, students and their families shared refreshments and treats that were sponsored by the Friends of the Bear River Refuge. Overall, the Bear River

MBR hosted 224 individuals for the Banner Party. Individual's artwork will be hung along the light posts of Main Street from June 13th through July 15th.



Shellby, 4th grader from Mt. View Elementary, holding up her completed banner.



Bird Banner Artists holding up their interpretation of the "Birds of the Refuge"

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Play Unplugged—Brigham City

Turn Screens Off so you can Turn Life On!

Play Unplugged encourages kids to put down their electronics and get outside and play. While getting the kids outside, it also provides motivation that gets kids out in the community and active in new places. Kids earn a Brag Badge for every activity they complete. Each Brag Badge has points they can collect and then turn in for real life rewards as defined by their parents. “Play Unplugged’s” goal is to help kids re-engage with the real world, help parents plan a fun and exciting summer, and give much needed visibility to local businesses.

This year, the Box Elder County Tourism has sponsored the “Bird Watcher” Brag Badge (pictured on the left). To earn this badge, participants will need to visit and explore the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge’s Educational Center and walking trail. While exploring, one will also need to find a bird, learn how it moves and lives, and try to imitate the bird’s call. If they can complete these tasks the individual will earn 5 brags.

If you’re interested in learning more about Play Unplugged please visit the Play Un-

plugged web page:

family.weplayunplugged.com

Friends of Bear River Bird Refuge

What Can You Do?

You can participate solely with your annual membership, but we encourage you to become an active member by assisting with a variety of the organization’s activities.

- ◆ Assist with special events or meetings
- ◆ Volunteer to staff the bookstore

Membership Benefits:

Members will receive a 10% discount in the bookstore. Pick up a membership application today in the Wildlife Education Center, 2155 West Forest Street Brigham City, Utah 84302, or visit our website at www.fobrr.org.



Welcome to the Avocet Corner Bookstore!

The Avocet Corner Bookstore is operated by Friends of the Bear River Refuge. We have a new addition to the bookstore, local artist Royce Yarnell created wooden pictures for



the Avocet Corner Bookstore. Some have color added into the wood to capture the colors of the various waterfowl, others are lined with rope to accentuate the picture. Come visit the bookstore to see more local artists renditions of wildlife and amazing photography captured on the Refuge.

The bookstore also offers bird identification books, wildlife puzzles, animal puppets, coloring books and more. It is a great place to put together your very own Junior Ranger backpack. From butterfly nets, to critter keepers, a magnifying glass, binoculars, and ‘My First Peterson Field Guides’, you can discover the Refuge on a whole new level. The kids will love it and so will you! We are located inside the James V. Hansen Wildlife Education Center.



Store Hours:

Tuesday-Friday: 10:00am to 5:00pm

Saturday: 10:00am to 4:00pm

Closed Sundays, Mondays and Federal holidays.



Love birds? Wildlife? Conservation? Sharing with others?
Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge



We're looking for friends to become volunteer team members!



Join our team! We're looking for:

- Asst. Ranger-Naturalist
- Environmental Educator
- Avocet Corner Bookstore Asst.
- Data Entry Specialist
- Social Media Assistant

Volunteering is one important way that you can participate with the Bear River MBR –



Sora / Cardine

It's a great way to get outside, get involved with wildlife conservation, learn about birds and their habitats, educate visitors, and meet other enthusiasts. Not to mention, it is a great place to volunteer!

Bear River Refuge is currently seeking committed volunteers to fill positions at its world-class wildlife education center. Interested? Call us at 435-723-5887.



American Avocet and babies. Photo credit R. Dudley

Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge was established in 1928. It provides feeding, resting, and breeding habitat for millions of birds annually.

*White-faced
Ibis on nest
with baby at
Refuge. Photo
credit: Aaron*



Junior Ranger Backpack

Check out our Junior Ranger program!

Come visit the center anytime during business hours and check out a Jr. Ranger backpack for FREE! Go to our website and print off the activity workbook with 15 fun activities and earn your Jr. Ranger patch today (available for purchase in the Avocet Corner Bookstore). Visit our website to print off the Jr. Ranger packet: http://www.fws.gov/refuge/bear_river_migratory_bird_refuge/



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2155 West Forest Street
Brigham City, Utah 84302
435-723-5887

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